

## Cannons Creek - Headlines ignore Community Strengths

There can be little doubt that recent deaths have effected the Cannon's Creek community causing much sadness, and a questioning of community values. However, amongst the Wesley Porirua Team, the subsequent reflection and discussion seems to have hardened their resolve by sending a strong message that *'our work is even more essential now.'*

As staff members at Wesley Porirua noted; *"Cannons Creek is a resourceful and vibrant community and (we)*

*remain confident that this community is capable and best placed to address such issues."*

Wesley Porirua's Canon's Creek office has been working with young people for over 13 years and at the forefront of Wesley's Canon's Creek initiatives are:

1.) A Young Persons Recreation programme which runs regularly in the Cannon's Creek Opportunity centre and provides a focal point for young people overseen by youth workers who provide non-intrusive and valuable mentoring.

2.) In conjunction with the Ministry of Youth Development and Aotea College, Wesley's ENGAGE initiative last year supported 217 young people to find 'positive connections' via mentoring.

Once the door is opened, and it may only be a crack, the good work can flow. Wesley Porirua offers a range of holistic initiatives that offer practical help and which can carry on helping in a variety of ways.

For example, under Wesley's guidance, youth attending recreation evenings can also benefit from a Vaka Tu-anui programme, or a drivers licence programme, or a cultural Identity programme or even a musical

programme.

A family benefiting from Wesley's food-bank may find more support from Wesley's budget advice or free counselling.

All these programmes are designed to lead seamlessly from one to another, improving feelings of achievement and self worth. The words of these two teenagers sum up the benefits;

*"When I first started Engage I felt uncomfortable... I was having problems with ... wagging and feeling empty inside. Now I feel wanted and loved and I don't wag no more. I feel love and not emptiness....."*

*"I have learnt that you're not always alone you always got someone there for you and the Engage group makes me feel awesome because most of my issues relate to others in the group. I feel really comfortable sharing now."*

Robyn Pope, Manager of Wesley's Community Services notes; *"Our ENGAGE programme struggled for some time, but it has achieved good results in a climate where the*



*need for our services has never been so high."*

*"While we are fortunate to have strong relationships with Ministry of Youth Development, NZ Lotteries, the Porirua City Council and a variety of other funders such as the Tindal Foundation and the Hutt Mana Charitable Trust etc., - continued funding remains a concern and in 2008 we face a \$80,000 deficit."*

### Also in this issue:

Te Wana Accreditation	2
Making a Difference	2
Working to Wainuiomata	3
Taking a Leap	3
People & Places	3
SB Conference Success	4
Contact & Donations	4

**Cover Pictures;** Graffiti signage at the Canons Creek Superette and (below) a typical evening at Wesley's Canons Creek recreation programme



## Wesley to achieve Te Wana Accreditation

After a three year process, Wesley Community Action (WCA) has been recommended to receive accreditation to the Te Wana Quality Improvement programme, which in turn is affiliated to the Quality Improvement Council of Australasia (QIC) and the International Society for Quality Health Care (ISQua.)

The Te Wana and QIC Accreditation certifies that Wesley Community Action has met (and in many cases exceeded,) the relevant Standards set by Te Wana and has participated in a 3 year continuous quality improvement audit and service improvement programme to reach this achievement. The name 'Te Wana' grew from a 1999 Health Care Aotearoa national hui and the name "Te Wana", "embraces one and all, Te Tiriti O Waitangi, all the partners within Health Care Aotearoa and encompasses challenge and progress."

At this hui, Health Care Aotearoa identified quality programmes as a priority for its members and determined that the most appropriate model was the QIC model.

Since these beginnings Te Wana has been adopted by over 20 New Zealand organisations, while QIC has accredited over 200 Australian Health providers. In gaining accreditation, Wesley joins other New Zealand organisations such as Plunket, Health Pacifica, Te Runanga o Toa Rangitira, the Mental Health Coordinating Council, Newtown Union Health Service, Ngati Porou Hauora, and Pacific Health Service Porirua.

The three year Te Wana accreditation process involved examination of Wesley's processes in relation to;

- Te Tiriti o Waitangi

- Human Resource management systems
- Occupational Health & safety systems
- Service and programme systems
- Finance and administrations systems
- Planning and review systems

"We are delighted to be recommended for accreditation, it is a tribute to the hard work of many of our staff," says WCA Director David Hanna, "however it is important to note that accreditation is just one step on the path, quality improvement is an ongoing exercise that will lead to a continual raising of standards in our organisation – we can never be complacent. There is already evidence of benefits from the improvements achieved for which the Board, staff and volunteers can be justifiably proud."

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## Do we make a difference?

*This tale was reported by our staff recently;*

'K' (not her real name) started missing school and running away when she was around 12 years old.

At that time it seemed to her to be the best way to escape the contradictions and worries caused by a mother constantly in 'p' induced haze and a succession of 'step fathers'.

Young K also found that by running away she could escape the added responsibilities of feeding and looking after her two younger siblings

which was made even more impossible when there was no money in the house.

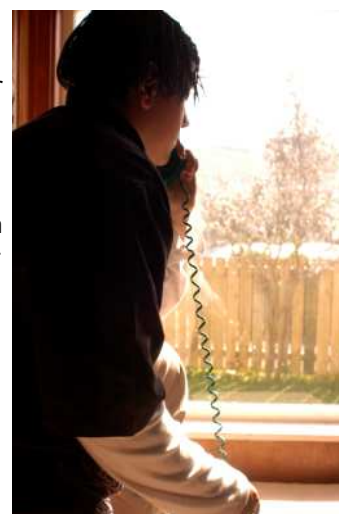
The reality of running away is not the stuff of romantic fiction such as Huckleberry Fin, the reality is scant food, sleeping on friends sofa's and missing valuable schooling. Sleeping 'rough' can lead to further abuse, to petty crime, and to selling sex for favours.

It wasn't long before K came to the attention of authorities. After a succession of placements, including gaol, K ended up in

Wesley's Te Whare Whakapakari, (a residential home for young people.)

K responded well to the unconditional love and counselling at Te Whare, and after an extended break from her family, began to make tentative reconnections back to her mother.

Home visits followed, and her mother began to address the issues caused by her addiction. More home visits were planned, and K has recently returned to a much safer home.



## Working her way to Wainuiomata

For most of us tending a garden is a chore, but for the last 11 years, 94 year old Mavis Rushworth has been gardening acres of native bush clad hills between Wainuiomata and her residence in Wesleyhaven Village Naenae, turning gorse clad slopes into a maze of flower clad paths, and shady dells.

The undertaking would daunt most young able-bodied people, but from dawn to dusk, seven days a week, Mavis has worked hard at her self imposed task even though her sight was failing and she struggled to walk without the assistance of two walking sticks.

Despite poor eyesight that prevented her seeing the results of her handy-work or even the splendid views that she has created, Mavis knew all the plants by sight, feel

and smell. "I don't mind not being able to physically see the garden as I can still visualize it. For me that's enough," said Mavis.

On occasions Mavis had been known to lose track of time while gardeing much to the concern of her daughter who resorted to phoning in the evenings just to be make sure that her mother was down off the hill. Mavis's daughter often joked that her mother will only rest, "when she reaches Wainuiomata."

Currently the garden that Mavis has created is quiet. No longer is Mavis found tending the hillside. Instead Mavis has taken the opportunity to leave Wesleyhaven village and join her daughter in a new family home in Tauranga. Parting with her garden was not easy, but the opportunity to be with her family and take a well earned break was an opportunity that

could not be refused.

However, knowing Mavis, it won't be long before she finds another garden and starts heading south, "gardening her way to Wainuiomata."



## 95 Year takes a leap... living life to the full



Bungy jumping at any age is not for the faint hearted, it can be a scary, risky and potentially dangerous activity. However, for 86 year old Nelson Renner from Wesleyhaven Village, Naenae, the temptation to jump was a challenge that simply had to be taken.

Later, Nelson who lives independently at Wesleyhaven Village, admitted that he had done the Taupo bungy jump once before, "I did the jump first on my 80<sup>th</sup> birthday," said Nelson, adding that, "just because you are old you don't have to stop living life to the full."

*"Just because*

*you are old,*

*you don't have to*

*stop living*

*life to the full"*

## People & Places



**Peter Glensor** has reluctantly tendered his resignation as Chairperson of the Wesley Community Action Board in order to devote more time to his expanded role with the Wellington Regional Council.

His replacement as Chairperson is **Desmond Cooper**, who has been a WCA Board mem-

ber for several years.

Recent new appointments to the WCA Board are **Steven Finlay** and **Fuailangi Salepolu**, while **Senorita Laukau** joined during 2007.

At **Weleyhaven** two key appointments have been made. **Joan Pryde** takes on

a new role as Business and Administration Manager and **Betuo Chung** has been appointed as Manager of Wesleyhaven Hospital.





## Strength Based Conference a HUGE success.

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The Strengths Based conference hosted in part by Wesley Community Action in November 2007, was attended by over 200 participants and was deemed a resounding success by the vast majority.

In post-conference evaluations 98% of the participants rated the conference above 5 on a scale of 1 to 10, and an incredible 82% rated it at higher than 8.

Typical comments noted the quality of the presenters, and spoke of a friendly relaxed conference. One respondent noted, "I now know more about the Strength Based model and can contribute to our organisation's mission." Another, "The whole conference gave me a strength based buzz. I feel excited about promoting and working within a strength based model."

Strength Based practice represents a way of seeing, a way of thinking and a way of engaging with people. Since the first New Zealand conference in 2003 a movement has grown for whom this way of seeing, thinking and engaging has sparked meaning and value. The 2007 Conference asked 'is this the next frontier?'

Keynote speakers included; Professor Whaturangi Winiata, Michael Durrant, Dr Barry Duncan, Tania Thomas and David Hanna.



The following a message that was placed on an international web server by Dr Barry Duncan one of the key-note speakers:

*"Words can't quite capture the experience-to see Māori elders, advisors, artisans, and scholars pay homage to ancestors and the land in their native tongue while white professionals not only understand and speak the Māori language,..... It was truly a sight to behold.*

*This doesn't mean that things are perfect, or that past deeds have not had devastating effects, or that anyone has arrived at the summit of cultural perfection, but rather that here are two cultures as distinct as there are on this earth struggling to understand and value one another and doing a pretty*



*damn good job of doing it . . . It was far and away the most stunning demonstration of authentic (not my previous experience in other places) respect and appreciation that I have ever witnessed.....*

*Thanks NZ for the inspiration."*



## YES! I would like to make a Donation

I would like to make a donation of \$.....

Donations over \$5.00 are tax deductible . Please post this form to Wesley Community Action. PO Box 9932, Wellington.

I would like to make a regular monthly donation of \$.....

Please send me a receipt

I would like to make a "one-off" donation of \$.....

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

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**Method of Payment**

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Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you!*

